



Harvard Climate Initiative Committee

Meeting Minutes of January 12, 2023

The meeting convened at 7:36 pm on Zoom

Members: Present: Jefferson Burson, Ellen Sachs Leicher, Sharon McCarthy, Deborah O'Rourke, Jaye Waldron, Lucy Wallace

Staff Present:

Guests: Stacia Donahue, Kara Minar

1 – Approval of December 8, 2022 minutes

Sharon moved to accept the minutes; Lucy seconded. All in favor.

2 – 2023 Goals

Discussion ensued among the members as to how to implement the goals of the CAP and what were the 2023 priorities in terms of goals for the committee. As Town Meeting is at the end of April, HCIC should work on preparing information for the meeting. Ellen confirmed that HCIC is in the Annual Report this year. One aspect to present is a new statewide Stretch Code that requires any new buildings (commercial, municipal, or residential) to be fully run by electricity or if fossil fuels, they must meet a higher efficiency level. Lucy stated that HCIC needs to fully understand what that means so the information can be presented at Town Meeting.

Stacia said that the Planning Board spoke with the building inspector- to discuss putting regulations in place that require structures to be built “electrical ready.” HEAC is looking at presenting at the Fall Special Town meeting.

Jefferson cautioned that the Education goal should be focused on before any regulatory hammers are developed.

Lucy suggested that an Outreach subcommittee be formed made up of people are skilled at public outreach. The subcommittee would not have to be members of HCIC but could be anyone who is interested in that task. Jefferson state that each focus area of the CAP has an Outreach component, and the subcommittee could work on one focus area at a time.

3 – Implementation Plan – Next Steps

The liaisons to each of the 6 focus areas should partner with the committee they will be working with at a kickoff meeting to discuss the next steps for each focus area to start working on the goals. One of the standing HCIC meeting dates could be used for liaisons and the committee/board they work with to hold a kickoff meeting. The liaisons would report back once a month to the greater HCIC to report on how things are going. Each group should prioritize the activities to work on for the coming year.

Sharon stated that there is state grant money available for outreach activities. Ellen confirmed that the proposed HCIC budget included funds for outreach. Jefferson suggested that there might be activities that the outreach groups could do that would not require funding. Those activities could be done while sources of funding are sought for larger projects that would require funding.

Kara mentioned that the Select Board has questions about the proposed HCIC budget, but those will need to be asked later. Ellen stated that there were 150 responses received from the energy poll that was included in recently mailed real estate tax bills.

4- Outreach Update and Next Steps

Biggest Little Garden Movie Showing:

Deborah said that the first two weekends in March are possible dates (dependent on Volunteer Hall availability) for the showing of the film. Application will be made to the Garden Club to see if they can support the costs of the film and some advertising.

Earth Day Show and Tell Around Town

The event, to be held April 22nd (rain date April 23rd), will be similar to last year's with the addition of vendors/suppliers of heat pumps, solar vendors, etc. HES parking lot and front field will be used for EVs, vendors, community groups, etc. Sharon thought that her contact at Tower Hill could do a presentation/demonstration on the electrical land scaping tools that they use at their facility.

Deborah will work with Ellen to develop ideas and recommendations for the event. One idea to promote conversion to electrical systems is to award residents who put in a heat pump or other system with a flag or colored banner that they can hang up or place on their front lawn where their neighbors (and anyone driving by) can see to show their commitment to carbon reduction actions.

Harvard Energize

There needs to be more outreach to folks to sign up for Harvard Energize and also a way to send out notice to people who have signed up when updates to the site occur. Ellen stated that she has lined up potentially 7 Energy Coaches and wants to get that information out to residents. Lucy liked the idea and suggested an ad in the *Harvard Press* to publicize it. Deborah

thought perhaps having one of the coaches at the Earth Day Event would also be great. Jefferson stated that each month there could be focus on a specific topic and goal discussed on Harvard Energize with a link that people can use to get more information.

5- Grant Writing – MVP Expression of Interest

HCIC has submitted an Expression of Interest. The more formal process will be announced in February and the Grant Application will be due in April. Ellen said that Peter Dorward was working with the Harvard Conservation Trust to acquire property that connects with Cisco in Boxborough. This would be a regional request with Box borough to purchase land. Peter is also submitting an expression of interest and will apply as well.

6- Budget Feedback

Ellen said there were a lot of questions from the Finance Committee about the requested budget and she is asking for further comments from members of HCIC on the budget. Ellen also wrote the Town Report (for Town Meeting), which Rich edited. She is also asking the Committee for feedback on the report. Any feedback due by Sunday, Jan 15.

7- Other Business

Ellen stated that the town is looking to increase the CPC surcharge, which will be a subject of the February 13 Special Town Meeting.

Stacia mentioned that a Town Center Entertainment Overlay District is being proposed at the Special Town meeting. The agricultural licenses for entertainment have not been agreed upon and will not be part of this Special Town Meeting.

Ellen wrote a letter to the Editor of the *Harvard Press* and Rich wrote an article that will appear in the paper tomorrow.

Also mentioned was that Needham was applying for a Grant to electrify school buses and that Harvard joined that effort. Through Green Communities, money is being secured to purchase 1 hybrid police car for Harvard. HEAC is looking to get charging stations installed in town.

The next HCIC meeting will be held on January 26th at 7:30 pm.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:46 pm